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THE ANZAC PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

LANCE CORPORAL COBBER

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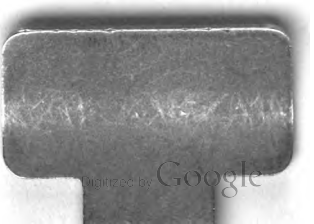

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THE ANZAC PILGRIM'S PROGRESS ❦ BALLADS OF AUSTRALIA'S ARMY

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THE ANZAC PILGRIM'S PROGRESS ❧ BALLADS OF AUSTRALIA'S ARMY ❧ BY LANCE-CORPORAL "COBBER" ❧ EDITED BY A. ST. JOHN ADCOCK ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO., LIMITED

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226068
JUN 19 1919
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Dedicated

TO

THE OFFICERS AND MEN

OF

THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND

ARMY CORPS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THERE is behind this book an interesting story which I am not permitted to repeat. Something of it, as much of it as Lance-Corporal Cobber thought—for he is a modest man—that the world at large would care to know, is to be read in and between the lines of the poems themselves; and as I am debarred from saying more about him it is only necessary I should acknowledge that the responsibility for the editing of these ballads, the omission of one or two, and the inclusion of any which the critic thinks ought to have been omitted, rests entirely upon me.

A. ST. J. A.

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THE TIME O' DAY

He hears
the call
in Australia
and
sets forth
on his
Pilgrimage

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THE TIME O' DAY

QUEENSLAND. AUGUST 1914

THEY say it's in the papers, but before the word was there
I saw it in the sky last night—I heard it in the air:
The west was red as blood with it, an' when the night was stark
A hoarse wind stirred the mulga, shoutin' "War!" across the dark.
An' now the news has rumbled in aboard the Darling mail,
An' every passin' rouseabout is bustin' with the tale;
Perhaps it's come a bit too slow, perhaps a bit too fast,
But here's the hour that had to strike, an' we know the time at last.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Lay yer Sunday pants away, Sabbath days
are done,
Give yer shears to someone else, what you
want's a gun,
Can't you hear the thunder call: Come in
out o' the sun?—
Coo-ee!
Coo-ee-ee!
Hump yer blue an' away!
Leave the gals to mind the run, they can milk
the cows,
Ring the mickies, sow an' reap, mind the
chicks an' sows,
We've got tougher work to do—durn the why
an' hows—
It's war-time,
War-time,
That's the time o' day!

Old Daddy Bull's in trouble, out on t'other side
the map,
The old 'un's peeled his coat off, gettin' ready
for a scrap;
It's Kaiser Bill that's called the tune—he's sworn
to euchre John

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The Time o' Day

By sittin' on the Empire that the sun can't set upon :
That Empire's ours as well as John's, an' any gory cuss
Who ups an' makes a jab at him has stuck his knife in us,
An' you can bank on this with all the ready you can spare,
That when the Empire fights for life Australia will be there.

We've hopped in Nulty's shanty on the light fantastic toe,
We've picnicked in the sunshine on the shores of Warrigo,
An' here's a slap-up party they are givin' out in France
With ruddy goose-step Prussians for yer partners in the dance :
Let's hoof it to Toowoomba, while there's time to catch the train ;
There's a new recruity depôt booming down in old Brisbane—
Let's rush the early door afore the place begins to fill,
An' we'll be some o' the early birds a-catchin' of Kaiser Bill !

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Kiss the gals you leave behind, all the blondes an' browns,
Soon you'll send 'em picter cards home from foreign towns;
Up an' foot the long white road over Darling downs,
Coo-ee!
Coo-ee-ee!
Hump yer blue an' away!
You won't miss yer Sunday pants, Sabbath days are done,
You won't miss yer rake an' hoe when you've got a gun;
Can't you hear the thunder call: Come in out o' the sun?
It's war-time,
War-time,
That's the time o' day!

1914.

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THE SHORTEST WAY TO THE FRONT

After much
tribulation
he is
made into
a
Soldier

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THE SHORTEST WAY TO THE FRONT

THE Sergeant what drilled us for weeks an' weeks,
He spoke as a Sergeant mostly speaks :
He said we was nothin' but blinkin' freaks ;
He roared like the cannon crashes.
My talk isn't always good to tell,
But the Sergeant's words were the kind that—well,
The kind that you have to try to spell
With dots, an' stars, an' some dashes.

He drilled us for months an' months, an' swore
He'd drill us for ever an' evermore ;
So I says to him, " Sergeant, we're sick an' sore,
Fed up with this drill-book stunt ;
I didn't sign on just to romp about
An' play in the sun like a young boy-scout,
What we want you to do is to take us out
The shortest way to the Front."

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"You!" says he. "Why, you blankety lot,
Wouldn't be seen at the Front with yer—not
For all the gilt that our dash an' a dot
Of a Government ever minted!
Call yerselves men? Lord, how was you made?
You never was born, an' can't ha' bin laid,
You're nothin' but blobs o'——" (The thing he said
Is not allowed to be printed).

"You've two left arms, and yer wind's unsound,
Y' got two right legs that stick to the ground,
An' yer feet 'ave bin fixed on wrong ways round,
You're boss-eyed, knock-kneed, barmy;
You're deaf," he says, "you stars an' a blank,
You don't walk straight an' you can't keep rank,
You're only fit for a shop or a bank,
You're no dash good to the Army!

"Should'r arms! Form fours! Quick march! Keep pace!
Mark time! Right turn! Halt, you (*censored*) disgrace!"
He kept us at it all over the place
Till the sweat rolled off us in streams;
Seemed as he wanted to cure or to kill:

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The Shortest Way to the Front

Nothin' all day but route marchin' an' drill,
An' all night long, if we slept, we was still
A-formin' fours in our dreams.

At last, he spoke as a Christian shud:
"When you come to camp you was lumps o' mud,
But now, you are men, you are flesh an' blood,
You are real live soldiers, s'welp me!
An' if you're as square as you orter be
When the Padre arsks, Who made yer," says he,
"You'll tell him the truth, an' say it was Me—
An Gawd didn't even help me!"

There's several ways to wherever you go,
But only one way for the blokes that know:
They git there quickest by travellin' slow,
An' that's why they're worth their blunt.
I guess it's a howler, at any rate,
To be there too early, or there too late,
An' the Sergeant knew, an' was showin' us straight,
The shortest way to the Front!

1914.

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At Brisbane
he meets
an old Chum
who narrates
how he contrived
to get a place
among the
Pilgrims

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SAM

PROPPED on the bar,
His dial a-grin,
He shouted, "You thar,
Come on right in!
Togged up, a dude
In khaki, like me—
Didn't know you'd
Come on *this* spree.

"Eh? You do not
Know who I am?
I'm old Sam Stott,
Pious old Sam!—
But the Sam you
Knew's off the slate:
He's fifty-two—
I'm thirty-eight.

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" Savvy, old chap ?
I fixed it all.
(*Let's 'ave a lap ;*
This is my call.)
I am, I guess,
Two men in one :
I'm old Stott, yes,
And young Sam Dunn.

" Soon as I knew
War was the ticket,
I humped my blue—
I couldn't stick it
Out back, this scrum
Warn't to be missed ;
So off I come
Here, to enlist.

" Told the young jay
Date o' my birth :
Forty next May,
Born down in Perth.
So I slid through,
Safe as a rock,
Till I come to
Deal with the doc.

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"That doc's no card
To fondle the sick;
Pokes with a hard
Fist like a brick;
Biffs me—I stood
Stripped 'fore he'd start—
Says, '*You're* no good,
Y' want a new heart!'

"Gosh! but that squirt
Fair made me dizzy;
His 'Put on yer shirt,
Meander, I'm busy,'
Stunned me complete;
Next thing I knows on,
I'm in the street,
Chucked, wi' my clo'es on.

"That had me bust,
That did me down;
I went an' just
Painted the town,
Dreamed, while I sat
Blind in this pub,
I'd flattened that
Doc with a club.

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" Then, when I stood
Pretty near broke,
Thinks I, ' No good
Playin' the moke ;
I could arrive at
Th' Front if I tried,
This war ain't private—
I'm goin' inside.'

" Fust, I found a
Hair-dresser's shop :
' Mister,' I say,
' Gimme a crop,
An' when that's cleared,
Don't make no gashes,
Scrape off my beard,
An' my moustaches.'

" Wal, from that place
When I depart,
I'd lost my face—
Kep' my old heart !
Out, slick an' smug,
New-like, I came
With a new mug—
And a new name.

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Sam

"At the deepo
I slung it straight:
Sam Dunn, Chill'goe,
Age, thirty-eight.
Doc banged my ribs,
Like he would break 'em,
'Good,' says his nibs,
'Good as they make 'em!'

"That is how I
Served him up raw,
So's to git my
Share o' this War.
New heart, the chump!
M' old 'un, I'm in with it,
And—it's—a—trump:
You see me win with it!"

1914.

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UNDER ORDERS

His regiment
marches
out of Camp
on the way
to
embark

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UNDER ORDERS

THE pick of ancient bouncers, both Greek and Roman too,
Were sons of gods an' took no odds as common mortals do;
Whenever they were cornered or worsted in a fray
Their parents came in cloud or flame an' sloped them safe away.
It's easy to be heroes when gods are loafin' round
To help you slap the other chap an' keep you safe an' sound,
But we don't git the luxuries they gave to heroes then:
We're the mortal man Australian—we're men, an' sons of men.

But we're comin', Kaiser Bill,
We are comin', Kaiser Bill,
When you see our Emu feather
You can look for stormy weather,
We are comin' all together, ripe an' ready for a mill:

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Some with feathers, some with none,
Every man a fighting one—
We are out to set things hummin'
When we come, and we are comin',
We are comin', comin', comin,' Kaiser Bill!

We're not *your* brand o' swaddy, machine-made
goose-step things
That have to fight if, out o' sight, you choose to
pull the strings;
We rule our kings, we're freemen, who call their
souls their own,
Not serfs that must go stouchin' just because a
bugle's blown;
We know, for we're no dillys on guff and guyver
fed,
The reason why we do or die before we're done or
dead;
We know that Deutschland uber alles would not
sit light an' soft
An' we'll take care she's never there—until she
goes aloft!

Not rattled, bullied conscripts, no War Lord we
obeyed:
We tilled the soil, or used to toil in every kind
of trade

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Under Orders

As grocers, stockmen, miners, as lawyers, peaceful blokes
Who perched on stools or taught in schools, as shop an' factory folks,
As axemen, artists, writers, as coves that printed books,
As bushmen, bakers, undertakers, actors, chemists, cooks—
But we've chucked the desk, the bench, the store, the paint-pot and the pen,
Hammer an' plough, an' we're soldiers now, and fust-class fighting-men.

And we're comin', Kaiser Bill,
We are comin', Kaiser Bill!
You have set the drum a-rattle,
So we've done with crops an' cattle,
If you're wantin' bloody battle, Gawd, but you shall have yer fill!
'Fore you boss the earth, ole toff,
We'll be there to shove you off—
We have done with schools an' summin',
Done with shearin', clerkin', plumbin',
And we're comin', comin', comin', Kaiser Bill!

1915.

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GOOD-BYE

One girl
speaks
for
the girls
of
Australia

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GOOD-BYE

WHERE are you going, you boys of the South?
I shall see you sail from the harbour mouth
And wave my hand as I watch you go,
But where you are going I shall not know.

We haven't been told ourselves—perchance
We are sailing for England, perhaps for France;
We only know that the anchor's weighed,
And we're going a-fighting, sweet, we said.

"May I go with you, boys?" said she,
"It is bitter hard in these days to be
A woman who can but weep and pray
While you're fighting and dying far away."

Nay, you must stay on the quiet shore
To do the work we can do no more,
That we may remember, through good and ill,
The light in the homestead's shining still.

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But you shall go with us, all the same,
For whenever we're scorched in the battle's flame,
And whenever we triumph, as we shall do,
Our hearts will be full of the thought of you.

So it's good-bye Marjorie, Mary, Bess—
You are all these names and some more, I guess;
It's good-bye Maisie, Daisy and Flo:
You shall go with us wherever we go!

1915.

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ON THE SAND

He journeys
to Egypt
and
grows weary
looking for
the War

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ON THE SAND

THEY 'ave dumped us in the desert, by the sleepy slimy Nile,
Where there's too much sand an' far more thirsts than drinks;
We 'ave done the plagues of Egypt in a champeen, slap-up style,
Queered the fellahs an' the locusts an' the grinnin' crocodile,
An' we've had some donkey-ridin' to the Sphinx;
We've bin boiled an' baked an' frizzled till we're turnin' brown an' lean,
For it's only cool inside a Pyramid;
Out o' doors the sunshine burns an' shrivels everything that's green,
It's as dry as if you'd tumbled into—you know where I mean,
An' somebody had shut the bloomin' lid!

But we haven't found no War here, an' we're more than half afraid
They haven't got none saved for us, or else it's bin mislaid;

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

We mooch around and arsk 'em: "Where's this War we came to get?"
An' everybody's heard of it but no one's seen it yet!
So at Sertun and at Maadi we are stewin' in the sun,
And there's nothin', nothin' doin', 'cos there's nothin' to be done!

Have you route-marched in a desert with a copper-coloured sky
Glarin' like a doorless furnace overhead,
With the sand all shiftin' through yer, in yer boots and in yer eye,
In yer throat and in yer tummy, cakin' rough an' thick an' dry,
And yer tongue a solid, red-hot lump o' lead?
Have you drilled an' drilled an' stiffened into automatic things,
While yer brains was parched and shrinkin' all away,
Till yer arms an' legs was bits o' wood that jerked on rusty springs,
An' the earth kep' waltzing round yer, an' you seemed to walk in rings
An' yer innards turned to sawdust mixed with hay?

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On the Sand

Is it strange that when we went on leave we cut
the traces slick ?
Ar, we woke up old Ca-iro with a shout,
We shook the dead bazaars alive an' scared the
Moslems sick,
An' the yashmacked Cleopatras pattered past us
coy an' quick,
As we turned the whole caboodle inside out.
Ar, glad an' bad an' gay it was—but some 'ave had
to pay,
They pranced it blind along the primrose track,
An' they're broken now an' outed, they 'ave
shipped the bunch away,
Their name is Mud, poor gazobs, an' we chews
the rag to-day
For the legion of the lost that's booted back.

Oh, it's sand an' sand an' sand agen, an' nothin'
else but sand,
An' we're trampin' through to nowhere with-
out end !
Oh, we're tired of evenin' sing-songs, tired of
listenin' to the band,
Tired of diggin' miles of trenches over Pharaoh's
roasted land,
An' we'd hail the foe an' greet him like a friend ;

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But we keeks across the Suez an' he never comes in sight :
Has a sandstorm choked the blighter dark an' deep ?
Has he perished of a sunstroke, has he scooted in a fright ?
Lord, we left our little happy homes a-purpose for to fight,
An' there's nothin' here to do but sweat an sleep !

For we haven't found the War yet, an' we're more than half afraid
They've finished it without us, it's forgotten, or mislaid,
An' we mooch around an' arsk 'em when the War will be on show,
Has it met with any accident? But no one seems to know ;
So we blister at Menai, frizzlin', grizzlin' in the sun,
And there's nothin', nothin' doin', 'cos there's nothin' to be done !

1915.

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THE SUEZ SCRAP

He relates
how the Turks
came
to take
the Suez Canal
and went back
in a hurry
without it

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THE SUEZ SCRAP

AN airyplane slid up the sky an' dived for home in haste;
Our camel scouts came lopeing back across the sandy waste;
An' every boy in the trenches knew, an' passed the word to his pal:
The Sons of the Prophet were out, at last, to jump the Suez Canal!

We'd waited for him weeks an' months, an' groused at false alarms,
But now our long-lost foe was found an' comin' to our arms,
An' our sergeants struggled to hold us back, an' could scarcely keep us in check,
From a-swimmin' out an' a-runnin' in an' fallin' upon his neck.

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But hard an' fast they kept us down an', stuck in
our trenches tight,
We chortled to hear our patrols' guns snipin' him
out o' sight,
An' gave three cheers an' one cheer more when
the last scout galloped back
With a holy push of Ottoman coots a-crowdin'
close in his track.

Around the hills and over them they toiled to the
level land,
Narked with the blinding dust an' heat an' their
mule-teams stuck in the sand;
Over the hills an' round the hills they floundered
and filtered through,
While we sent them an early shell or so as a sort
of how-d'ye-do!

They opened out for miles an' miles to test our
line in bits,
But every time they did a feint we countered an'
gave 'em fits;
They dug themselves in deep an' snug when the
sun was near its fall,
An' then the sky shut down at once, and the dark-
ness covered them all.

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But rumours of them filled the night: with
strangled oaths an' shouts
They hauled their guns an' hid them close in
make-shift sand redoubts
Or flogged their toppling carts along where Suez,
dark as the Pit,
Lapped at the wood an' iron they launched for a
pathway over it.

We watched that pontoon crawlin' out, black on
the water's grey,
An' when they'd shoved it half across we scared
them from their play:
The whistle shrilled, our rifles spoke, an' our
shells began to scream—
We wiped the builders off that bridge an' wiped
the bridge from the stream.

By then, the boats they'd manned an' launched,
by four an' five an' six,
Were nosing out across the gloom as the doomed
glide over Styx:
We sank the first, the second, the third, riddled
from stern to stem,
They tried to get Suez an' got too much, an' so
the Canal got them!

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But two dodged cutely in an' beached, an' the Moslems, good an' game,
Charged through our blast of lead, but we were ready when they came :
The first that sprang to the top o' the slope, shrieked " Allah ! " once an' fell,
I druv my baynet flush to the hilt—an' flung him as deep as hell !

Ah, joy, to have them there at last, to meet them hand to hand,
To top their stroke with a better stroke an' roll them on the sand,
To see them launch boat after boat an' pelt 'em with fire an' lead—
Gawd, we gave them Suez with both our hands an' tucked them up in its bed !

All day, when night was gone, they fought—it was their day of doom :
They tried their strength, an' broke it, on the forts near white Toussoum ;
From Suez to Ismalia their desperate front they drew,
They felt our line from end to end, but found there was no way through.

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The Suez Scrap

Our gunners knocked their batteries out an' baulked their fiercest raids,
Searched all their holes an' trenches, smashed their sandy barricades,
An' kept them lively on the hop an' strafed them high an' low,
For everywhere those Moslems went our shells they were sure to go!

So night came plungin' down agen with silence grim an' stark,
Till now an' then some sniper fired at random in the dark;
An' when night's wings, at morning's touch, began to sort of moult,
We saw the Turks had chucked the sponge—they were up an' doin' a bolt!

Their stores were strewn as leaves an' things are scattered by a gale,
An' crippled carts an' sand-logged guns lay heaped along their trail;
They'd left their wounded where they dropped, they'd finished their Suez stunt,
They'd had their fill, an' more than their fill, an' turned their backs on the front.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

An' our Light Horse, the spry N.Z.'s, and the English boys, you bet,
Could hardly wait till the floats were out to waft us over the wet:
After them, hell for leather, we went to show them out at the door,
An' set those Prides o' the Harem a pace they never had run before.

Oh, the Turk is a bonzer man to fight,
He'll stick to his enemy hard an' tight
An' go it with all his main an' might,
An' laugh at your steel an' shot;
But once he is licked, in the self-same vein
He'll turn an' trip it over the plain
With all his might an' with all his main
An' with all the legs he has got;
An' he never did it before, they say,
So thoroughly well as he did that day
When he came to a rout down Suez way
An' showed us the Turkey Trot!

1915.

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ME
AND SAM
AND THE SPHINX

He puts
a few
conundrums
to the
Sphinx
but gets
no answers

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ME AND SAM AND THE SPHINX

THE Sphinx they say's a female who with riddles could perplex
The fellaheen, the Sultan and the Cadi;
But that's guff for rubbernecks an', whatever was her sex,
She don't look like the portrait of a lady.
She counts her years by thousands; she has learned a thing or two,
As wide she is as Solomon, or wider,
Yet she never gave a clue to the marvels that she knew
When me and Sammy breasted up beside her!
She knows the riddle of the spheres, an' could have blabbed a lot
More secrets than we ever hid at Maadi,
But she kept them close an' squat—which she wouldn't if she'd got
The nature an' the instincts of a lady.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

I've heard the muezzin call to prayer
From the minarets at dawn,
An' know the Moslems think that we're
Heathens an' devil's spawn;
We think it's them that walk in night,
Sinful an' God-forsaken,
An' I wonder which of us guesses right,
Or whether we're all mistaken?

But says Sammy, "It's no use arskin' me,
An' it's no use arskin' the Sphinx,
For I can't think what to say," says he,
"An' she can't say what she thinks!"

Across these sands a century back
Napoleon's armies came;
To-day we're marchin' in his track
To play the same old game;
Yet man since then has, anyhow,
Advanced an' done his best:
I wonder what we'd be doing now
If the world had not progressed?

But says Sammy, "It's no use arskin' me,
An' it's no use arskin' the Sphinx,
For I can't think what to say," says he,
"An' she can't say what she thinks!"

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Me and Sam and the Sphinx

The parsons pray for war to cease,
  But discord never ends;
Even in peace we need police
  To save us from our friends.
We go to Church to seek for grace,
  An' then come out to sin:
I wonder whether the human race
  Was ever meant to win?

But says Sammy, "It's no use arskin' me,
An' it's no use arskin' the Sphinx,
For I can't think what to say," says he,
"An' she can't say what she thinks!"

Why should we run each other through?
  Man's born to die, we're taught—
Is life so long that we must do
  Our best to cut it short?
Meanwhile, we teach our kids at schools
  The truths we treat as lies:
I wonder whether it's only fools
  Who wonder if we're wise?

But says Sammy, "It's no use arskin' me,
An' it's no use arskin' the Sphinx,
For I can't think what to say," says he,
"An' she can't say what she thinks!"

1915

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TO
GALLIPOLI

He lands
at Gallipoli
and passes through
the Valley
of the Shadow
to victory on
the heights above
Anzac Cove

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TO GALLIPOLI

HOW did you go to Gallipoli,
Soldier, Soldier?
We went in the dark, with never a sound:
The slim destroyers walled us round
And ran before us to clear the way
From Tenedos into Saros Bay;
We crammed the cutters, above an' below,
At the tail o' the ships that had us in tow,
With cruisers to shepherd us safely through,
For the Fleet was our father an' mother too;
An' battleships dowsed in the night about,
Fussing like hens when their chicks are out,
Watchfully, warily after us swept—
Till we came to where Gaba Tepe slept.

How did you go to Gallipoli,
Soldier, Soldier?
We saw no shore in the moonless bight,
It lay close locked in the black o' the night,

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An' grimly silent an' all unlit
Our boats went gropin' in search of it:
As soon as the first keel grated the sand,
In we plunged to wade to the land,
But were tripped an' torn, till we cursed an' bled,
By barbed-wire traps in the shallows spread;
Then, when the Turks woke high in the vast
An' their guns roared down like a thunder-blast,
Our mother, the Fleet, arms bared for a whack,
Punched 'em with shells on their hills at the back.

How did you go to Gallipoli,
Soldier, Soldier?

The shot splashed round an' the shrapnel flew,
But we stuck it out, an' we struggled through;
We dragged at the wire with bleeding hands,
We stumbled over it on to the sands;
Deaf an' blind in the murk an' roar,
We raced an' crawled up the rocky shore
An' mustered an' ducked for breath, a jiff,
Behind ragged boulders an' juts of cliff—
Then, with a rush, an' openin' wide,
We climbed those hills like a risin' tide,
Like a tide that billowed higher an' higher
An' couldn't be turned with steel or with fire.

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To Gallipoli

How did you go to Gallipoli,
Soldier, Soldier?
Up, still up, till we staggered an' swung
Round the broken crags, or slipped an' clung
To the grass an' scrub, then on again
We plugged through the burstin', shatterin' rain
That poured an' roared from the peak o' the hill:
Higher an' higher an' higher still,
Then into their trenches we flung with a shout,
An' before we were in 'em the Turks were out:
We chased an' spitted 'em slick, as they shinned
From ridge to ridge like chaff in the wind,
An' only paused on those rugged towers
When the day had come—and the day was ours:

How did you go to Gallipoli
Soldier, Soldier?
It wasn't, we knew, a kind of hotel
Where they'd let you in when you rang the bell:
Death kept ward at the gate of our goal
An' we couldn't pass till we'd paid his toll:
So we paid in full, though the price was high,
An' we got the goods we had gone to buy.
Through a Valley of Shadow, deep an' dread,
Hewn by the living an' paved by the dead,

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Through night that blazed into light as we came,
Through water an' blood an' iron an' flame,
Through all the worst that the damned can know—
That's how we came where we meant to go.

We were sent to land
On Gallipoli, and
We went to land
Through the mists that hid it:
We said we would,
An' we knew we could;
We swore we would—
An' we did it!

April, 1915.

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DREAMING IN A DUG-OUT

He remembers
a
lost Love
and avenges
himself
on Abdul

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

DREAMING IN A DUG-OUT

BETTER than all the best that we can do
Is what we strive to do with vain persistence :
Our happiest dreams are those that don't come true ;
The stars are only dazzling at a distance—
Once we have climbed the heavens which ensphere them
They turn to dust an' darkness as we near them.

Life is a jest, but no one sees the joke ;
It's been the same, they say, through all the ages :
When one chap's done the job, another bloke
Comes loafing round and gathers up the wages :
The prize you win by slaving or by sinning
Is never quite the prize you dreamt of winning.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

We do not get the moons for which we cried;
The things we preach are not the things we practise;
Although I said in Sunday School that I'd
Forgive an' love my enemies, the fact is
That here my thoughts have lost that goodly colour,
An' I delight in strafing poor Abdulla.

When Jenny kissed me, life was heaven below,
We talked of love an' livin' in a cottage;
But that dream went, when Jenny let it go
To wed a gilded bug of Lord knows what age!—
It went like wine when some one pulls the plug out.
An' now I'm livin' loveless in a dug-out.

Is Jenny loveless too, in far Brisbane?
Or does she make the best of life as I did?
I tried to sort of give myself to Jane,
My heart with Sue an' Molly I divided;
I played with other loves, perhaps too many,
But still my thoughts keep hankerin' after Jenny.

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Dreaming in a Dug-Out

Awhile in Jenny's love I basked serene,
And whether I was worth it was my sole doubt;
To house her in a palace like a Queen
I grasped the world an' meant to squeeze its gold out;
An' now I've waked from dreamin' of that great feat
My house is just a burrow four by eight feet!

I've done with Love, he hurts you all he can,
And still there's nothing of him you can whack at;
The Turk's at least a solid fighting man,
He's no god Cupid that you can't hit back at.
An' I'm so narked to think what joys have missed me
I'll go an' give him hell—'cos Jenny kissed me!

1915.

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THE SNIPER

He cautions
young
Soldiers
and tells
how he went
a-sniping

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THE SNIPER

IT'S a law of the trench which the wise never flout,
Always put up yer periscope when you look out.
Don't go a-peekin' over the top,
For a bullet's a thing that you shouldn't stop :
They pay for their skite who
Are mugs an' try to !

Any Bill-Jim who gets a bit swanky and shows
His cap, or his head, or the tip of his nose
Over the edge of the sand-bag wall
Will be jerkin' it down with a large or small
Kind o' puncture in it
In half a minute.

Then it's no good him startin' to ramp an' to swear
That he hadn't supposed there was any one there ;

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

No good him arskin' how it was done—
If he leans out to look, that skunk at the gun
Will soon with a ditto
Make him emit "Oh!"

On the slope o' the opposite hill there's a tree
By itself, an', so fur as you're able to see,
Nobody's in it doin' a mike,
An' you can't guess at once that the lump what's like
An innocent, drab, dull
Bough is—Abdul!

There is likewise a bush in the valley below,
But it isn't a bush, if you only could know:
It's Abdul agen, stripped smooth an' clean,
Lyin' tied up in twigs with his skin stained green,
Lookin' no more'n a
Part of the fauna.

But we crawled out one evenin' an' *we* did a snipe,
An' he fell from his tree like a plum over-ripe;
We stalked that bush an', to leave no doubt,
We rooted up Abdul an' bedded him out:
You cannot be hyper-
Soft with a sniper!

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The Sniper

Just you tuck yerself in an' look little or less,
When a sniper is strafin' your private address:
'Tisn't your photo he's come to take,
So you'd better keep down, for your beauty's sake.
Don't pose to him, whoso-
Ever may do so!

It's a law of the trench which the wise never flout,
Always put up yer periscope when you look out.

1915.

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BIRD

"Lieut.-Gen. Sir W. R. Birdwood has been the soul of Anzac. Not for a single day has he ever quitted his post. Cheery and full of human sympathy, he has spent many hours of each twenty-four inspiring the defenders of the front trenches."—

Sir Ian Hamilton's Dispatch.

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BIRD

NOW, the boss the Bosches like
Is a tin-god swankin' tyke
With a helmet an' a spike
On his nob,
An' a nob as big as three,
Swollen more than it should be,
Just becos he feels that he
Knows his job:
He's a snob
And a skiter, yet—he knows his bloomin' job!

Them tin-gods may strut an' swell,
Heroes for the servant-gel,
But the boss for us is—well,
P'raps you've heard
'Bout our High Serang? He's *some*
To have with you in a scrum;
He's a chief an' he's a chum
Known as Bird:
Take my word,
He's a full-size Man is Birdwood, known as Bird.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

He's no bully, doesn't mag,
Doesn't swank around an' sprag,
You will never hear him brag
    Like a Hun,
But if there's a job to do
An' he comes to arsk us to,
Why, we simply put it through—
    It gits done:
    Bet yer gun
What Birdy wants the boys will git it done.

He's no God A'mighty cuss
Frilled with flash All-Highest fuss,
He's a pal, he's one of us,
    But, gee-whiz!
He's the best of us, we know,
An' when he says "Come!" we go,
He belongs to us, an' so
    We are his—
    Any biz
That is doin' is our business if it's his.

Birdy doesn't disappear
In a funk-hole at the rear
When the shrapnel's droppin' near
    An' you swear

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Bird

'Cos the blighters didn't dig
All yer dug-outs twice as big—
If you look around you'll twig
That he's there,
Come to share
In the beano that the boys are havin' there.

When you have to sit an' cower
Under drum-fire hour by hour,
Pipped an' narked an' turnin' sour,
Then, you bet,
He'll be nippin' somewhere round
Just to see you're safe an' sound,
Sayin', "Buck up, keep yer ground,
Even yet
Don't git wet!"
An' he starts the grousers cheerin' even yet.

If you've fairly got the hump,
Tired of Beachy Bill an' Crump,
He's a tonic and a trump
Then, is Bird;
When you're fagged an' hipped an' blown,

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

When you've clean lost heart, an' groan,
He will lend you half his own,
With a word,
Like a bird!
He can set all hell to rag-time with a word.

There's no thunder in his style,
Nothin' fierce about his dial,
But he gits you with a smile
Full of grit;
For a leader through the blast,
When the lead flies thick an' fast,
Give me Birdy first an' last—
He is IT:
Every bit,
He's a man, a gent, a soldier—he is IT!
1915.

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A SONG OF THE TRENCHES

He has
a
vision
of an
ideal
Trench

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A SONG OF THE TRENCHES

I DREAMT that I dwelt in a padded trench
With a feather-bed for a floor,
An' could sit when I liked on a softer bench
Than had ever bin stuffed before;
I was washed an' clean an' my clothes were new,
I was happy an' all was well,
An' a waiter brought what I told him to
Whenever I pushed the bell.

But I woke, an' was back in the same old ditch
An' the same old mess an' dirt,
With too many holes in my pants to stitch
An' not much left o' my shirt;
An' instead of a waiter an' all things nice
Where we could sit down at ease,
There was only the same old rats an' mice,
An' the same old —— an' ——!

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

When the weather was dry, we blistered an' fried
  Till we felt about fit to drop;
Now it's chilly an' damp, an' we can't git dried
  For the trench fills up with the slop:
It's wind an' rain an' mist an' mud,
  An' then, when yer hump's at its height,
You find yer last match is a bloomin' dud,
  Or your fag is too wet to light.

And you mustn't look over the parapet,
  Though yer dug-out's stuffy an' low,
For the Turk outside is a-watchin' to get
  A pot at the heads that show;
Still—we'll see it through, we will never blench,
  An' perhaps on some golden shore
I may dwell at last in a padded trench
  With a feather-bed for a floor!

1915.

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SOMEBODY
MISSED
THE 'BUS

He is
up against
somebody
unknown
who queered
the
Campaign

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SOMEBODY MISSED THE 'BUS

NOW, this is a song of how things go wrong more easy than they go right :
If you're out to play in a war to-day, you've got to do more than fight ;
It's your partner who calls the trumps for you that may land you into a fix,
The honours you touch won't reckon for much if he loses most of his tricks.
Oh, the Turk he knows, fur as fightin' goes, we went for him, one to ten,
An', though we'd begun what couldn't be done, hung on by our teeth like men,
An' stiffened our lips an' tightened our grips an' stuck to it all the same,
But our pards, the chumps what had called the trumps, they mucked their part o' the game.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Somebody missed the 'bus;
Didn't play up to us!
We paid his fare
But he never got there—
Somebody missed the 'bus!

We have left our dead in the ocean bed, we left
our dead on the strand,
But the guns ain't built that could make us wilt,
an' we fought our way to land;
It was steep an' stiff but we stormed the cliff, an'
we drove the Turk below,
We shattered his hopes at Quinn's an' at Pope's
an' on Lone Pine's grim plateau;
Down Sari Bair way an' at Suvla Bay we put up
some tidy fights,
An' the rocks are red with the blood of our dead
on Anfatara heights.
What didn't we do that they arsked us to?—Yet,
though you play good an' hard,
In war, at the end, you've got to depend on how
you're backed by your pard.

You can't fell an oak with an axe that's broke—
you can't do the work that's planned
If yer pard's too slow at the W.O. an' don't put
tools in yer hand:

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Somebody Missed the 'Bus

Does his best, perhaps, but he leaves us chaps
stuck fast in the worst of hells
To be baulked an' done, when we'd almost won,
for want o' supports an' shells.
Through a mug's mistake we are doin' a break, yet,
though we must pack an' clear,
We will make good, sure, what we've lost, an'
more—but it won't be now, nor here,
An' nobody knows the blighter who chose to soak
us in such a mess,
We are doin' a guy an' we don't know why, an'
can only partly guess.

Somebody missed the 'bus;
Didn't keep up with us;
We paid his fare,
But he never got there—
Somebody missed the 'bus!

1915.

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GALLIPOLI
GRAVES

How he
left
Gallipoli
and why
he will
go back

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GALLIPOLI GRAVES

GOIN' ? Yes. But glad to go ?
Glad ? Well, 'struth, I hardly know.
Wouldn't care if we'd put through
All the job we came to do.
Don't like quittin' anywhere
Till I'm done. But wouldn't care
That much, if I didn't mind
'Bout the boys we'll leave behind.

Jimmy Ward . . . Remember him ?
Little red-haired Sunny Jim ?
Pious Sam—not bad by half ;
Flynn—you'd know him by his laugh ;
Barnes the poet, Kent an' Minns—
All wiped out at Pope's or Quinn's :
Stood by me they did, an' now . . .
Don't like leavin' them, somehow.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Don't like seein' what's my own
Left in Abdul's fold, alone.
Them wood crosses, so to speak,
Keep a-hold like hands too weak . . .
Wonder, when we've done a clear,
Won't they feel-like lonesome here ? . . .
Guff ?—Perhaps . . . But me an' they,
We were chums Toowoomba way.

Can't be helped. We've got to go.
If the boys do kind of know
They will likewise, you can bet,
Know we haven't finished yet—
Know that somewhere, safe as sin,
We'll be fightin' till we win—
Know that by the time we've done
All they died for will be won.

Miles or years away, no fear
We'll forget them lyin' here :
When our shouts of victory peal
Round the world at last, I'll feel,
Waitin', listenin' underground
Here, they'll stir an' catch the sound,
Glad through all their dust agen—
Then they'll sleep, an' not till then.

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Gallipoli Graves

Say, those dead of yours an' mine
Make this barren shore a shrine;
All these graves—they'll draw us back;
And for ever in our track,
Down the years to come, will pace
Pilgrims of our Anzac race:
God, while this old earth shall stand,
Where but here's our Holy Land?

January 8, 1916.

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THE RIGHT WAY

After
a rest
he makes
a new start
in France
and apologises
to the Kaiser
for
the delay

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THE RIGHT WAY

WHY did we git our kit an' quit
Austra-li-a ?
Why did we roam from over the foam
Such a long, long way ?
We couldn't stand the goods they canned
In grand Potsdam,
So, one an' all, we are out to call
Upon Will-i-am.

Sorry to keep you waiting, Willie,
But we told you
We would drop in on you at Berlin,
And we mean to, too.
Sorry to keep you waiting, Willie,
But don't you fret,
We're on the road to your bright abode
An' we'll git there yet.

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Somebody thought a sort of short
An' back-way cut
Might do the trick an' carry us quick
To Will's place—but
We found the dells o' the Dardanelles
Were hells, and more,
An' turned to toe the way we should go
To the Hun front door.

We're on that way O.K. to-day—
We've passed what's been
Pozieres Mill an' Mouquet hill,
An' climbed Messines;
We are en route, an' Old Nick boot
The coot hind-most:
Every sign that points to the Rhine
Is our fingerpost.

Wait, Willie, wait, an' bait your hate
With hymn and song,
Warm it up thus all ready for us,
For we shan't be long;
Don't think that none want you, ma Hun,
Here's one, somehow,
Wants you so bad that he can't be glad
Till he gits you now!

Digitized by Google

The Right Way

Sorry to keep you waiting, Willie,
But we told you
We would drop in on you at Berlin,
And we mean to, too.
Sorry to keep you waiting, Willie,
But don't you fret,
We're on the road to your bright abode,
An' we'll git there yet!

1916.

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THE UNWRITTEN LAW

He reflects
on the
Frightfulness
of the Hun
and how
it will
come home
to roost

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Digitized by Google

THE UNWRITTEN LAW

IT has been said that they who crucified
The mortal body of the Son of Man,
Broken for that transgression, 'neath the ban
Of earth's and heaven's remembrance wandered wide:

Shame dogged them like their shadow everywhere,
And, shunned as with a leprosy defiled,
From common human brotherhood exiled,
They bore the brand that Cain was doomed to bear.

Their cup was filled with sorrow to the brim;
Scourged with men's scorn, derided and despised,
Dumbly they bowed in soul and agonized,
Nailed to the cross that they had raised for Him.

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And this new race, who know not honour's creed,
Who crucify, with hate obscene and blind,
The living spirit of Christ, and seek to bind
Again for Death and Hell the world He freed—

(They reek with blood of children they have slain,
Their strength has crushed the helpless and the weak,
Of piteous women's tears and blood they reek,
Nor all the Rhine can wash away their stain;

They shatter laws that curbed our baser lust,
The loftiest hopes that man had builded fair
And sanctified with patient toil and prayer
Their barbarous hoofs have trampled in the dust)—

When they have lost the stake for which they diced,
And life's best aims have triumphed o'er its worst,
They shall go outcast and more justly accursed
Than those who martyred but the body of Christ.

1917.

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OUT OF IT

He arrives
at the end of
his Pilgrimage
and muses
at ease
in a
City Beautiful

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Digitized by Google

OUT OF IT

LORD but it's good to be dossing snug in
a neat an' quiet bed,
With clean sheets over an' under me,
an' a pillow to prop my head,
Nothing to do by night or day but sort of drift
with the stream
And take my meals at the proper hours, an' think
—an' sleep— an' dream.

Good to wake an' look at the Nurse as she passes
to an' fro
With a tread so light on the snowy boards you
can scarcely hear her go,
To be touched by her soft white hands an' see her
face, serene as a star,
As if you were happy an' safe at ease in the place
where the angels are!

I dream sometimes that I'm yonder still in a
bomb-proof, squattin' tight,
While Fritz is loosing it over us an' makin' a hell
of the night,

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

Or I'm gropin', one of a raiding squad, through
the mud an' the silence stark,
And seeing red when the steel drives home an' the
blighters drop in the dark.

Then I jerk, an' wake—and am lyin' here, where
there's never a crack of a gun,
And the Ward is hushed an' dead in the night, or
alive an' bright wi' the sun;
An' it's not so good to feel that I'm dumped to
gather moss, like a stone,
While the pals I knew are swotting to do my job
as well as their own.

But I'm down and out, I'm laid on the shelf, a
has-been, a left-behind,
Wrapped in my little lot o' the peace that we all
set out to find,
And no réveillé will call me up till I'm roused by
the last loud Trump,
For I marched into battle on two good legs but
am out on one an' a stump!

I paid the price of this peace that's mine an'
don't complain of the deal,
But I couldn't have had the little I've got if I
didn't sort of feel

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Out of It

That I've paid my part of the higher price—it'll
cost us all we are worth—
To buy from the bloody gods of War not Glory
but Peace on earth.

There are guys who chin in a swankin' style o' the
folly of those who stand
To stem the ravening tide that swells an' threat-
ens to flood the land,
But if none of us risked our lives for them, if
nobody stood in the gate,
If nobody held the terror back—how long could
they pose an' prate ?

When the mad are out on the murder trail to
bring in the rule of Might,
If the wise just met 'em with empty hands to
reason of what is right
And, instead of fighting for all that's best, sat
proudly down to be slain,
The wolf an' the ape 'ud come into their own,
an' the mad would govern the sane.

The dainty conscience may stand aside, the
pacifist preach or rave,
Yet they'll take their share in the world o' the
free that they wouldn't fight to save :

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The Anzac Pilgrim's Progress

There are always dead-heads at every show an'
will be for evermore,
But I fancy he proves his conscience best who
pays his dibs at the door!

And at least I've paid as much as I could, an' it's
better than good to know
That my mates are makin' the balance square and
settling all I owe,
That Teddy an' Dick are bound to guess I am not
where I want to be
An' never will pass a jolt to the Hun without
giving him one for me!

For I'm down an' out, I am left behind, tucked
up in my little bed,
With clean sheets under an' over me, and a pillow
to prop my head,
But I thank the Lord though my body's broke
an' I'm hobbled so hard an' fast,
I've still got a hefty, two-legged soul and it's out
with the boys to the last!

1918.

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